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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ADDIS ABABA 001781

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [PTER](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [SO](#)
SUBJECT: AFRICAN UNION: FRAZER URGES KONARE TO REMAIN FIRM,
MOVE FAST ON AMIS TRANSITION

Classified By: AF A/S JENDAYI FRAZER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND
(D).

1 (C) SUMMARY: In a June 25 meeting with AF A/S Frazer, African Union (AU) Chairperson Konare initially expressed deep concerns about the AU's ability to overcome renewed Sudanese objections to the transition from an AU (AMIS) to a UN Mission in Darfur. Konare explained that the GOS' strategy was to delay the transition until at least January in hopes of blocking it altogether, since the GOS believed it could by then restore military control over Darfur alone. Konare speculated that President Al Bashir would seek to use his position as head of the Arab League to rally anti-U.S. and anti-Israeli sentiment to block the Darfur mission and perhaps undermine support for the UN in southern Sudan as well. The Chairperson conveyed pessimism that either the UN or AU member states would resist a relentless GOS diplomatic initiative. A/S Frazer told Konare bluntly that the AMIS transition was a defining moment for the AU and for his leadership. The AU, member states and partners must not allow the GOS to divide them. She assured Konare that the GOS would back down from its opposition to the UN transition in Darfur in the face of a united African front. UN Security Council members, including China, would also respect a united AU position on the issue. Frazer agreed with Konare's suggestion that the USG intensify efforts to firm up the resolve of key African leaders, including South Africa -- Chair of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) -- as well as Nigeria, Senegal, Egypt, and AMIS troop contributing countries. The AU's June 27 ministerial-level PSC meeting would be key. PSC Konare and Frazer also agreed that southern Sudanese leader Salva Kirr could also galvanize support within the GOS for the UN Mission in Darfur. Although still skittish about assistance from NATO, Konare accepted A/S Frazer's proposals that the AU accept the NATO advisory and headquarters assistance offered as soon as possible, and that the U.S. and Canada could provide help with a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) using existing helos in theater, with details to be worked out through PSC Commissioner Djinnit and technical staff. End Summary.

12. (C) A/S Frazer called on AU Chairperson Alpha Omar Konare June 25. Frazer was accompanied by Charge, CJTF-HOA Commander RADM Rick Hunt, Lt. Commander Mike Sowa, AF Special Assistant Kendra Gaither, AF Somalia/Djibouti deskoff Nole Garey and Pol/Econ Counselor. Konare's special assistant, Amb. Toure, joined the Chairperson. Discussions on Somalia, Comoros and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) will be reported via septel. This message will focus on Sudan.

KONARE RATTLED BY SUDANESE REJECTION OF UN DARFUR MISSION

13. (C) A/S Frazer thanked Konare on behalf of the Secretary for his letter requesting additional NATO help to build AMIS' capacity. She expressed her concern, however, about recent statements from UN U/S Guehenno to the effect that the planned transition from AMIS to a UN Mission in Darfur could not take place until January 2007. She highlighted the financing problems that this would create, especially given cost increases already expected at the upcoming donors conference on Darfur. Frazer highlighted the need for both the USG and the AU to pressure the UN to accelerate its planning process, relying more on existing AMIS troops and infrastructure. The A/S said Sudanese President Al-Bashir's recent rejection of the UN deployment in Darfur was merely another in delaying tactic. Some GOS concerns could be addressed by a modified Chapter 6 mandate that would allow for protection of civilians and peacekeepers, but the transition must move ahead.

14. (C) Commenting on the situation on the ground in Darfur, Konare told the A/S that there were no longer any attacks on the ground between the GOS and rebel groups since the signing of the DPA. Banditry continued, as did violence between different rebel groups. The situation was in this sense even more difficult than before for humanitarian workers trying to operate where neither the GOS nor AMIS was in control, since no one knew where attacks would come from next. Konare urged that countries impose sanctions against those rebel leaders who continued to foment violence and noted that SLM leader Minni Minawi was increasingly exasperated at the lack of

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action against those attacking him. Minawi could now move freely in El Fasher and the GOS was able to do the same in areas Minawi controlled, which Konare called an important step forward for the DPA.

15. (C) Konare initially expressed deep concerns, however, about the AU's ability to overcome renewed Sudanese objections to the transition from an AU (AMIS) to a UN Mission in Darfur. He noted that Al Bashir had been clear and unequivocal about his rejection of the UN Mission to PSC Commissioner Djinnit in their recent meeting in Khartoum during the visit of the UN/AU Joint Assessment team. Konare explained that the GOS' strategy was to delay the transition until at least January in hopes of blocking it altogether, since the GOS believed it could by then restore military control over Darfur alone. Konare speculated that President Al Bashir would seek to use his position as head of the Arab League -- and potentially AU President in 2007 -- to rally anti-U.S. and anti-Israeli sentiment to block the Darfur mission and perhaps undermine support for the UN in southern Sudan as well. The UN would be unable to move without GOS permission, and China would block UNSC action without GOS approval. The Chairperson conveyed pessimism that either the UN or AU member states would resist a relentless GOS diplomatic initiative. He emphasized that "in these organizations (AU and Arab League), people don't tell the truth to those concerned," so countries were capable of taking unhelpful and surprising positions. The GOS appeared less and less constructive, with no coherent plan for a unified country, Konare noted with alarm.

FRAZER: DEFINING MOMENT FOR AU/UN COMMITMENT
TO CIVILIAN PROTECTION

16. (C) A/S Frazer told Konare bluntly that the AMIS transition was a defining moment for the AU and for his leadership. "History will judge us," she said. "The AU, member states and partners must not allow the GOS to

intimidate us into failing to protect innocent people." She assured Konare that the GOS would back down from its opposition to the UN transition in Darfur in the face of a united African front. UN Security Council members, including China, would also respect a united AU position on the issue. Konare denied that either he or the AU had backed down on the AMIS transition. He merely wanted to share his concerns with A/S Frazer. "I know the GOS. They will use everything they can to fight this. We must have a coherent, common position. You must fight, but your friends and allies must also do so. And we must begin now. If things continue as they are, Bashir will win." Konare agreed that the AU's credibility was on the line, as well as on the need to work closely with the UN.

17. (C) Frazer agreed with Konare's suggestion that the USG intensify efforts to firm up the resolve of key African leaders, including South Africa -- Chair of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) -- as well as Nigeria, Senegal, Egypt, and AMIS troop contributing countries. Konare claimed that Ethiopia should be "neutralized" on the issue. (NOTE: GOE FM Seyoum told Frazer separately that Ethiopia would stand firm on the existing plan for AMIS transition END NOTE.) The AU's June 27 ministerial-level PSC meeting, to be chaired by South African FM Zuma, would be key. PSC Konare and Frazer also agreed that southern Sudanese leader Salva Kiir could also galvanize support within the GOS for the UN Mission in Darfur. Frazer urged Konare not to let President Bashir frame the AMIS transition as an issue of sovereignty; it was important to keep the focus on the people of Darfur. She said the U.S. would try to work behind the scenes rather than taking a high-profile role on the issue.

UN TRANSITION MUST BEGIN NOW WITH PARTNER HELP

18. (C) Frazer also pressed hard on the need to commence the transition to a blue-hatted Darfur mission immediately, and to build the capacity of the mission now under AMIS using assets and resources from partners like the U.S., Canada and NATO. She argued that Sudan and the AU had already accepted NATO's help with strategic airlift; additional assistance in other areas should not require additional approval. Konare

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said he agreed, and suggested that strengthening AMIS would be "most easily done through the UN, since they are already there." The UN should not wait until January, he added. "I know our (AMIS) weaknesses, and it is more than a lack of money. More integrated troops could handle the situation in Darfur, and the AU does not have them." Although still skittish about assistance from NATO, Konare accepted A/S Frazer's proposals that the AU prepare to accept NATO Joint Operations Center Advisory and training teams to commence as soon as possible and that U.S. and Canada could provide help with a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) using existing helos in theater, with details to be worked out through PSC Commissioner Djinnit and technical staff. When Konare said that the report of the joint UN/AU assessment mission would be useful in planning, Frazer replied, "we don't need another assessment. We need to act now." She agreed that if it would be easier for individual NATO member countries to supply assistance on a bilateral basis, that was another way to proceed now.

19. (C) Summarizing the meeting, A/S Frazer concluded that the AU, UN and partners must push forward rapidly on all fronts, including:

- 1) Standing up to Sudanese pressure in the upcoming PSC meeting in Banjul;
- 2) Beginning deployment of UN assets and personnel now;
- 3) Finding other creative ways to assist AMIS now, to

include: (a) assistance from NATO; (b) assistance to AMIS from individual countries like the U.S.-Canadian QRF concept; and (c) bilateral assistance from a partner country direct to a deploying troop contributor, for example, providing training or mobility equipment (e.g. APCs, trucks).

Konare agreed with this strategy, and promised to take up the details with PSC Commissioner Djinnit at the AU Summit in Banjul.

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